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ABSTRACT

Noting that school provides one of the most important arenas for interactive processes that are crucial to children's healthy social development, this book examines the social, educational, and developmental psychology of the school environment, focusing on peer relationships and teacher-student interactions. The book demonstrates the complexities of children's social experiences in the classroom and the playground, emphasizing the relationship between context, behavior, and school success and stressing the importance of research on interactions for educational as well as social policy. Chapter 1 presents theoretical underpinnings and various models of development. Chapter 2 examines children's social competence and peer relationships. Chapter 3 summarizes how friendships develop with age, concentrating on the significance of friendship at school and the school breaktime as a context for friendships. Chapters 4 and 5 consider play and breaktime, respectively, discussing types of play, gender differences, temperament, timing of recess, and cognitive/social implications of breaktime. Chapter 6 discusses peer aggression, concentrating on bullying and victimization. Chapter 7 examines research and conceptualizations of the classroom environment, and connections between class size and the size and number of within-class groupings. Chapter 8 provides information on the nature of teacher-student interactions in classrooms and effects on educational outcomes. Chapters 9 and 10 examine literacy and mathematics learning, respectively. Chapter 11 looks critically at research on teacher expectations and the processes through which expectations might be mediated. Chapter 12 posits the argument that a better understanding of the influences on the relative performance of boys and girls is a main challenge for educational research, with important theoretical and practical implications. (Contains 487 references.) (KB)

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